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Reissner's Fibre. — This fibre has been found by Sargent[1] to extend from the posterior end of the spinal cord anteriorly through the central canal and the ventricles of the brain to the anterior end of the optic lobes. The fibre was identified in representatives of all the chief groups and subgroups of the vertebrates, upwards of sixty different species having been examined. In no case where the material was perfectly preserved was the fibre absent. The uniformity of the fibre and the fact that it can be demonstrated by a great variety of methods lead the author to the conclusion that it is not an artifact, but a normal structure and probably nervous in character. The paper is accompanied by figures from photographs which demonstrate very conclusively the presence and position of the fibre. P.

Preliminary List of the Mammals of New York. — In 1842 Dr. J. E. DeKay published a work on the mammals of New York, giving descriptions of all the species then known to inhabit the state, with figures of most of them, this work forming Part I of the *Zoölogy of New York*, published under the authority of the state. Since that date no general survey of the mammal fauna of the state had been attempted till the appearance in 1899 of Mr. Gerrit S. Miller's "Preliminary List of the Mammals of New York."[2] As Mr. Miller says: "To write a preliminary paper on this subject fourteen years after the appearance of Dr. C. Hart Merriam's two volumes on the mammals of the Adirondack region, and fifty-six years after the publication of DeKay's elaborate work on the mammals of the state at large, may at first seem paradoxical"; but he gives good reasons for calling his list a preliminary one. He justly claims that "one of the most important results of the recent great increase in our knowledge of the mammalian fauna of New York is the realization that nothing more than preliminary work can be done now. The whole area of the state must receive a thorough biologic survey before final results can be expected." And what is true of New York, it may be added, is equally true of any other considerable area of North America, and probably of any other equal area of the world, so little is really known of mammalian life anywhere. Until within very recent years, the small mammals of no portion of this or any other country were more than superficially known, as witness the large number of new and previously unsuspected forms that have come to light through careful and systematic collecting in even the longest settled parts of the United States.

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[1] Sargent, P. E. Reissner's Fibre in the Canalis Centralis of Vertebrates. *Anat. Anz.*, Bd. xvii, pp. 33–44, Taf. I–III, 1900.

[2] Miller, Gerrit S., Jr. Preliminary List of New York Mammals. *Bulletin of the New York State Museum*, vol. vi, No. 29, October, 1899, pp. 271–390. Issued Nov. 18, 1899.

Not the least interesting part of Mr. Miller's paper is his historical summary of the work thus far accomplished in making known the mammalian life of New York State, in which he traces the gradual advance of our knowledge of the subject from 1842 to the present time. During the forty years immediately following the publication of DeKay's work only three species were added to the list of the state, while eighteen have been added during the last ten years. The total number of known New York mammals has been raised from fifty-six in 1842[1] to eighty-one in 1899, while doubtless others still remain to be added by further research. These additions are mentioned in chronological order, and also shown by a tabular arrangement. Thirty-one species have been described and named from New York specimens, of which twenty are now regarded as synonyms of previously described species. The type localities of all are given on account of their interest from the point of view of systematic zoölogy.

The eighty-one species and subspecies listed by Mr. Miller include eight cetaceans, two seals, and three introduced species of Old World rats and mice. Deducting these leaves sixty-eight species of strictly indigenous land mammals known as inhabitants of the state. In some six or seven instances increase in the total number of forms is due to the recognition of subspecies, two forms being recognized as occurring within the state instead of one, as in DeKay's time, as in the case of the red squirrel, chipmunk, flying squirrel, red-backed mouse, cottontail (three forms instead of one), mink, etc. Lumping these, as was formerly done, would reduce the number of New York mammals to about seventy-three as against the fifty-six known to DeKay.

In other words, the twenty-four additions to DeKay's list include sixteen species and eight subspecies, the latter being in most cases covered by DeKay's names.

The faunal areas, or "life zones" of the state, are considered at length, from the point of view of birds and plants as well as mammals. Following this is the list proper. Under each species are cited the authorities for the names adopted, and all the principal references to the species as New York animals. The text under each species is so arranged and subdivided as to give (1) the type locality of the species; (2) its faunal position; (3) its habitat; (4) its distribution within the state; (5) its principal records for the state; and (6) remarks. The distribution of the various species within the state, and the citation of "principal records," are in general given with satisfactory detail. It hence seems strange that Dr. Holder's paper on the Atlantic right whale (*Balæna cisarctica*) should have been overlooked, especially since the paper (*Bulletin American Museum Natural History*, Vol. I, No. 4 (1883), pp. 99–138, Pls. X–XIII) was based primarily on a Long Island specimen, the skeleton of which has been on exhibition for twenty years in New York's greatest Museum of Natural History. A reference to Audubon and Bachman (*Quadrupeds of North America*, Vol. I, p. 148) on the former occurrence of the fox squirrel in New York would perhaps have been of interest.

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[1] DeKay gave sixty-five, but nine of these have proved invalid.

We regret to see that Mr. Miller adopts Mr. Bangs's proposed change of name for the common deer, from the well-established and familiar Virginianus of Boddaert for Americanus of Erxleben. It would not be regrettable if Erxleben had really used the name in a nomenclatural sense for this deer, which he clearly did not do, or even intend to do. Erxleben says: "Differtne vere Americanus vti Pennanto videtur?" and then gives its differences from *Cervus dama*, and cites the authors who have written of it. As he wrote in Latin he naturally used the word "Americanus" in the sense of, Does the American deer truly differ? etc. The context shows that where he gave names to either species or varieties, they are given as marginal headings, as under, for example, *Cervus elaphus* (*Regni Animalis*, p. 301), where our elk or wapiti is named (p. 305) Canadensis = *Cervus elaphus γ Canadensis;* and so on throughout the "Systema Regni Animalis." The case of the common deer, as treated by Erxleben, is thus not at all parallel to that of the elk; in the latter case a name was formally given; in the former, only by a violent distortion of the author's evident meaning and intentions can a name be extracted from Erxleben for the Virginia deer.

Mr. Miller gives also a useful list of the fossil species thus far reported from the state, numbering five, as follows: peccary, horse, elephant, mastodon, and the big rodent Castoroïdes. A detailed bibliography of 103 titles concludes this interesting and important piece of work. We regret to see, however, that Mr. Miller was compelled to submit to a system of "editing rules in bibliography," so out of harmony with nearly all similar work in zoölogical bibliography, simply because they have been "adopted by the Regents of the University of the State of New York."

J. A. A.